

## **International Students –Externships/CPT Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is Curricular Practical Training (CPT)?**

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is defined as employment which is an integral part of an established curriculum, including: “alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum which is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school.”

### **Who is eligible for CPT?**

F-1 students (international students) who:

- Have been in lawful, full-time status for one full academic year
- Are academically eligible to enroll in a course that requires off-campus employment.
- Are in a degree program in which off-campus experience is an integral part of the curriculum
- Are enrolled in an externship course for credit, and
- Have been offered a position that is directly related to their major field of study

### **Do I need a job offer to apply for CPT authorization?**

Yes. CPT can only be authorized for a specific position at a U.S. organization, at a specific location, during specific dates. The offer letter must be presented on company letterhead and must include the following information:

- Name and address of the employer
- Start and end date of externship – these dates must fall within the term
- Expected work hours per week
- Specify whether paid or unpaid
- Salary/wage information if paid
- List of responsibilities for the position

### **Do I need to be enrolled while on CPT?**

Yes. Since the CPT is granted in conjunction with an Externship class, you must remain enrolled in the class throughout the semester and work only during the approved semester dates.

### **Do I need to apply to USCIS (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services) for CPT?**

No. Your DSO (Designated School Official) may authorize your CPT within 5 business day after you submit your offer letter and your Externship Application has been approved.

### **When should I send my offer letter to my DSO?**

As soon as your Externship Application is approved, and you receive your offer letter from your employer. Be aware that it may take up to 5 business days for your DSO to issue your CPT I-20.

### **How do I submit/send my offer letter to my DSO?**

Offer letters must be submitted by email to your DSO in PDF format. You must email your offer letter to [lawinternational@ggu.edu](mailto:lawinternational@ggu.edu)

### **How will I know if my CPT has been approved and my CPT I-20 is ready?**

Your DSO will send you an email when your CPT has been approved and your CPT I-20 is ready. Your DSO will give you instructions on how you will receive your CPT I-20. If you do not receive this e-mail

within 5 business days after you submitted your offer letter send an email to your DSO or [lawinternational@ggu.edu](mailto:lawinternational@ggu.edu) to request an update.

**Can I start working while my CPT authorization is pending?**

No. You must obtain CPT authorization in your I-20 before beginning employment. CPT authorization cannot be back-dated.

**How do I know that I am authorized for CPT? And when may I begin the CPT experience?**

Your CPT authorization is shown on page 2 of your CPT I-20. You may begin working after you receive your CPT I-20 and have reached the authorized CPT start date. You may not begin your CPT experience if that start date of the CPT has not yet been reached, even if you already have the I-20 with CPT authorization.

**Do I need CPT authorization even if my Externship is unpaid?**

Yes. GGU requires CPT authorization for unpaid positions (such as unpaid Externships), even if a student does not need to provide employment authorization documents to the company. CPT is authorization to do practical training as part of the curriculum for the academic program, and not just for employment eligibility verification purposes.

**Do I need CPT authorization for a paid Externship?**

Yes. You will need to get CPT authorization for a paid Externship. Externships are classified as paid when any form of compensation is received for work provided. An externship can be considered paid if the employer pays for transportation, provides benefits such as health insurance, vouchers for meals, pays a salary or stipend, or offers some type of compensation.

**Do I need a Social Security Number (SSN)?**

For paid CPT, yes. You will need a SSN in order to receive payment from an employer. If your CPT is unpaid, your employer will probably not require you to provide a SSN.

If you need to apply for a SSN please contact your DSO or [lawinternational@ggu.edu](mailto:lawinternational@ggu.edu) for further guidance.

**Can I do full-time CPT?**

This option is only allowed during vacation terms/if you are enrolled for less than full time, but you must still be enrolled in the appropriate Externship course to gain authorization. Be aware that 12 months or more of full time CPT will invalidate eligibility for OPT.

**How many hours per week can I work if I'm authorized for Part-time CPT?**

You can work 20 hours or less per week if you receive Full-time CPT authorization.

**How many hours per week can I work if I'm authorized for Full-time CPT?**

You can work more than 20 hours per week if you receive Full-time CPT authorization. There is no limit on the hours you can work per week when you are authorized for Full-time CPT.

**Can I change the number of hours I work on CPT?**

You may change within the limits of part-time or full-time. For example, students may change from 10 hours per week to 15 hours per week without a new authorization. However, students who want to change from part-time to full-time (or vice versa) must request a new authorization and meet the requirements for the authorization.

**Does CPT affect my eligibility for Optional Practical Training (OPT)?**

If you have been authorized for full-time CPT for a total of 12 full months (365 days), you will not be eligible for OPT. Otherwise, OPT will not be affected.

**Note:** Specific CPT requirements vary from program to program. These FAQs applies to students in the JD and LLM programs only. If you are a SJD student, please contact [lawinternational@ggu.edu](mailto:lawinternational@ggu.edu) for additional information.